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ABSTRACT

Few empirical studies have specifically examined antecedents and consequences of reversing childrearing roles. A sample of 5[illegible] white, intact, middle-class families with a preschool-aged child, 32 with boys and 27 with girls, was studied. Also explored were the father's sex-role orientation and selected paternal behaviors and attitudes. It was found that the degree of paternal involvement in childrearing was positively correlated with the child's internality and with the father's efforts to stimulate the cognitive growth of his child, particularly his daughter. The father's role in childrearing was unrelated to his sex-role orientation which was as masculine for the men who were prime caregivers as it was for those whose wives were filling that role. (Author)

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Childrearing Fathers In Intact Families With Preschoolers

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Abstract

Some antecedents and consequences of reversing childrearing roles were studied in a sample of 59 white, intact, middle-class families with a preschool-aged child, 32 with boys and 27 with girls. Also explored were the father's sex-role orientation and selected paternal behaviors and attitudes. It was found that the degree of paternal involvement in childrearing was positively correlated with the child's internality and with the father's efforts to stimulate the cognitive growth of his child, particularly his daughter. The father's role in childrearing was unrelated to his sex-role orientation which was as masculine for the men who were prime caregivers as it was for those whose wives were filling that role.

The overall purpose of this investigation was to take advantage of an experiment occurring naturally in the environment and study some possible antecedents and consequences of the phenomenon. The experiment is that of role reversal of mothers and fathers in raising young children. The traditional mother role is that of nurturer whose prime function is to meet the expressive needs of the family; the traditional father role is that of instrumental leader who deals with external systems and is responsible for the economic support of the family (Parsons, 1951). Accompanying these functions are behaviors or personality predispositions which are expected to accompany each role. Pleck (1976) delineated them as including warmth and altruism for the women and competitiveness and aggression for men. When fathers are prime caregivers of young children and their wives work or attend school, the traditional role expectations are clearly violated. Very little is known at present about the consequences for the children of this role reversal, the prior relationship of these men to their own fathers which may have precipitated the new fathering role, or the differences in paternal behaviors and expectations between these nontraditional fathers and the men whose wives assume the prime child care role. This study hoped to shed some light on these issues which are significant not only for researchers studying socialization variables, but also for members of the helping professions who are called upon to counsel with families considering or presently engaging in role reversal.

There have been a few empirical investigations attempting to learn more about childrearing in alternative family forms (Eiduson, 1976; Mendes, 1976) but none that specifically examined intact families where husband and wife have exchanged child care roles. The closest was a study (Levine, 1976) of 120 American fathers who took on the responsibilities of caring for their children either as single fathers or househusbands. The report consisted largely of anecdotal information about these men, however, and the children spanned a wide age range. Although empirical data are lacking, various theories and concepts do provide a foundation for generating predictions about both precursors and consequences of parental role reversal. Insofar as possible antecedents of nontraditional fathering are concerned, investigations focused on perceptions of parents held by children and young adults suggest some socialization variables that might be relevant. Reuter and Biller (1973) concluded after such a study that males who have adequate opportunities to observe nurturant fathers will imitate their behaviors; nonnurturant or unavailable fathers may be inadequate models. These views are consonant with numerous investigations linking paternal warmth and the son's identification with his father (Kagan, 1958; Sears, 1953; Mussen and Distler, 1960; Radin, 1972). Other studies (Hetherington and Frankie, 1967; Hetherington, 1965; Biller, 1969; Mussen and Distler, 1960; Biller and Borstelman, 1967) have stressed the relationship between a boy's masculinity and his father's role as decision maker and dominant member of the family. Based on the above

literature, one could hypothesize that nontraditional fathers who are eschewing the traditional male role had fathers who were less nurturant, less available, and less powerful in decision making in the family than the fathers of men playing the traditional paternal role.

Concerning possible consequences of paternal childrearing, Aldous' (1974) theory of rolemakers suggests certain personality predispositions that might be expected of individuals creating new roles in families. These include fairly high self-esteem, flexibility, interpersonal sensitivity, and some sense of controlling their own destiny. According to Aldous, creators of new roles must possess these qualities since rolemakers have to improvise their behaviors in the absence of normative guidelines. It can be anticipated that rolemaking fathers who have some sense of controlling their own destiny, will be inclined to allow their children some control over their own destiny. Thus, childrearing fathers are likely to grant more independence to their children. Further, it can be hypothesized that children reared in nontraditional families will manifest more internality than their peers in traditional homes since their fathers are likely to value internality and will both model and differentially reinforce evidence of internality to a greater extent than traditional fathers. As no significant sex differences have been found in the locus of control of preschoolers (Chance, 1965; Mischel, Zeiss and Zeiss, 1974), predictions of sex

differences in this area are not warranted.

Insofar as interpersonal sensitivity or empathy are concerned, although some Piagetians (Chandler and Greenspan, 1972) might disagree, it is likely that the empathetic model provided by a father sensitive to the child's needs will foster the child's ability to decenter emotionally, particularly if the father also reinforces manifestations of this tendency in the child. On this basis, social learning theory (Bandura, 1972; Gewirtz and Stingle, 1968) suggests that children of nontraditional fathers would be more empathetic than those of traditional families. Since boys have been found to be less empathetic than girls (Feshback, 1968; Borke, 1971), and children tend to model the parent whom they most resemble (Kagan, 1958; Mischel, 1970), it is probable that the differences in emotional decentering between traditional and nontraditional offspring will be more evident in boys than girls.

Concerning the child's sex role identification, predictions are difficult since theoretical justification could be offered for both significant effects and no significant effects of parental role reversal. Mussen and Distler (1960), Kagan (1958), among others, have postulated that for a boy to adopt a masculine identity (defined sterotypically), his father must be nurturant and powerful. Since traditional female tasks are popularly considered to have low status, the boy may not take on the typical male orientation when his father is the prime caregiver. Further, Bronfenbrenner (1958)

and Biller and Borstelman (1967) suggested that paternal engagement in housewive's tasks fosters a feminine identification in sons. However, Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) concluded that the young child is a self-socializer in the area of sex identity; parental behavior appears to be relatively unimportant in the process. Money and Tucker (1975) also imply that parental role reversal when the child is past 18 months is likely to have little effect on the child's sex role identification. They postulate a "closed gate" concept in relation to gender identity; once it is established, it is established forever. Further, the research of Money and Erhardt (Pleck, 1975) suggests that the variable that is most influential in establishing a youngster's gender identity is the parents' perception of the child's sex. This will determine whether they respond to the youngster as a male or female, which in turn will determine, in most cases by two years of age, whether the child has a masculine or feminine gender orientation. In view of the disagreements, no hypothesis appears warranted concerning the sex role identity of father-reared preschoolers.

Concerning perceptions of parental roles by children, social learning theory suggests that youngsters will adopt the concepts modeled in their homes. However, perceptions of the father and mother roles may be so closely linked to the child's sex role identity that self-socialization or a fixed gender identity may be the more powerful variable involved, overriding the influence of parental behavior. Further, Pleck (1975) suggested

that preschool children have rather rigid stereotypic views of parental roles. In the light of the opposing theories, no predictions seem warranted.

In sum, the following hypotheses were generated, with the children's sex role orientation and perception of parental roles also investigated: In intact families with preschoolers,

1. Childrearing fathers will perceive their own fathers as having been less nurturant, available and dominant than will traditional fathers.
2. Childrearing fathers will grant more independence to their children than will traditional fathers.
3. Sons of childrearing fathers will be more empathetic than sons of traditional fathers.
4. Children of childrearing fathers will manifest more internality than children of traditional fathers on locus of control measures.

For exploratory purposes, an adult sex role orientation scale was also included to determine if there was a relationship between the degree of father involvement in childrearing and his own sex role orientation, but no hypothesis was generated concerning such a relationship. Similarly, his behaviors and aspirations relevant to the cognitive development of his children were explored without any hypothesis formulation.

Sample

The sample consisted of 59 white, intact, middle-class families with a child 3 to 6 years of age except for one child who was 32 months old. There were 32 boys and 27 girls in the study and the

families had maintained the current childcare arrangement for over 6 months. The family's social class was assessed by Hollingshead's (1970) latest scale which, as previously, rates the employed father's education and occupation but now also rates the employed mother's occupation and education. The scores of the father and mother are averaged if both parents are working to obtain a family score. If only one member is working, the score of that individual constitutes the family score.

The average child's age was 54 months, the average father's age was 34 years, the length of time the family had the current childcare arrangement was 35 months, the average Hollingshead score for the father was 58 out of a possible 62 and the average Hollingshead family score was 57, both within the top class, major business and professional occupations, in the Hollingshead schema. The children spent an average of 17 hours per week in a nursery, daycare center or kindergarten. The average Bem t score, an assessment of the sexual orientation of the respondent was -1.5118 within the near masculine range, as delineated by Bem and Watson (1976).

Participant families were sought through local newspaper articles, radio announcements, flyers left at nurseries and daycare centers, and notices posted at student housing units. Most families lived in Ann Arbor, or surrounding small cities. The sample was clearly self-selected; in the vast majority of cases one of the parents phoned the project as a result of having heard about it.

Procedure

A procedure similar to one that the author used previously (Radin, 1972; Epstein and Radin, 1975) was employed in the current study. Three appointments were made. In the first, conducted in the home, the father was interviewed for approximately one hour in the child's presence with no one else present. The child was given puzzles to complete at the end of the interview and told to ask the father for help if she or he wished. The entire interview and puzzle session were recorded on an audio tape recorder.

In the second interview, the same questionnaire was administered to the mother with no one else present. In the third session, again in the home, a series of tasks was administered to the child to be described below. At the end of that session, the mother was asked to enter the room and the child was given a new set of puzzles. Again the youngsters were told they could ask the parent for help if they desired. The entire mother interview and puzzle session were audio tape recorded.

The measures administered to the child were: 1) Stanford Preschool Internal-External Scale (Mischel, Zeiss and Zeiss, 1974) (SPIES), a measure of locus of control involving a choice between two responses; 2) The Stephens-Delys Test of Internality (Stephens and Delys, 1973), a locus of control test for preschoolers with open-ended questions; 3) The It-Scale (Brown, 1956), which assesses the child's sex role orientation; 4) The Parent Role Perception Test (PRPT), a modifica-

tion of the It Scale developed on this project, assesses the child's concept of the parent role. In this test, pictures of various household objects are shown, such as a washing machine, and the child is asked which parent uses each item, 5) a shortened version of The Kagan Parent Role Test which asks questions such as "Who spanks the most, mothers or fathers?" to determine the qualities associated with each parent. It was developed by Kagan and Lemkin (1960). 6) Borke's Empathy Test (Borke, 1971) which assesses empathy in children through a series of short stories; 7) The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, a verbal test in intelligence was employed to be certain the childrearing groups were equated for the child's intellective abilities; 8) The Ravens Coloured Progressive Matrices Test, a nonverbal intelligence test was also employed to be certain the groups were equated on child's cognitive abilities.

The parent interview included some open-ended and some close-ended questions designed to tap: 1) Expectations regarding the age at which children should be granted independence to perform potentially risky behaviors, for example, spending money as they wish. The Torgoff Developmental Timetable (Torgoff, 1967) was used for this purpose; 2) The parents' perception of their fathers' nurturance, and availability. A scale of Reuter and Biller (1973) was used to assess these perceptions; 3) The parents' perceptions of the relative power their fathers had in decision making. The questions used to assess the dominance of the preschooler's grandfather

was adapted from the items used by Price-Bonham (1976) and Blood and Wolfe (1960) to assess decision making and family power outcomes; 4) The parents' long term educational and career expectations for their preschooler and efforts to stimulate the child's intellectual growth was assessed by a shortened Cognitive Home Environment Scale (Radin and Sonquist, 1968); and 5) The parents' sex role orientation was assessed by the Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1976), which asks the respondents to indicate, on a seven-point scale, how well each of 60 adjectives, e.g., sympathetic, ambitious, describes them.

An effort was made initially to use the parent's own descriptions of their childrearing practices to determine three paternal involvement groups, high, medium, and low, but it was found that many parents were uncertain in which category they belonged. It was therefore decided to let the computer make the distinction . To provide the computer with data, an index of father involvement in childrearing was computed which included responses to questions in five areas: statement of father involvement in child care; father's responsibility for physical child care, e.g., feeding the children; father's responsibility for socialization of the child, e.g., setting limits for the children's behavior; father's involvement in decision making regarding the child, e.g., when the child should be disciplined; and father's availability to the child, e.g., frequency with which the father was home during the week for lunch. The responses to these 5 components were totalled and labeled Paternal Involvement

in Child Care Index (PICCI). The father's PICCI score was added to the mother's PICCI score for a PICCI Grand Total, which formed a continuous variable. The top 1/3 (with 20 families) and bottom 1/3 (with 20 families) were labeled the Father Prime Group and the Mother Prime Group, respectively. The middle scores formed a group of 19 families labeled the Intermediate Group. The overall mean for the Father PICCI was 40.6 and for the Mother PICCI it was 40.3, remarkably close in view of the fact that neither parent knew how the other had responded, nor how we were scoring their replies. There were 10 boys and 10 girls in the Father Prime and Mother Prime groups. In the Intermediate group there were 12 boys and 7 girls. The groups so formed were closely associated with both mothers' and fathers' global estimates of the percentage of time the father had prime responsibility for the child. For the Father Prime group, the mean percentage cited by the fathers was 58% and by mothers 56%. For the Mother Prime group, the mean percentage cited by fathers was 22% and by mothers 23%. For the Intermediate group it was 40.3% for fathers and 41.4% for mothers. Thus, it was felt that the PICCI Grand Total was a valid measure on which to base the group assignment.

To be certain there were no extraneous differences between the Father Prime and Mother Prime groups, *t*-tests were employed examining possible differences in the following variables: child's age, father's age, child's percentile score on the Peabody Picture Vo-

cabulary Test, Total Score on the Ravens Coloured Progressive Matrices test, Hollingshead Family Score, Hollingshead Father score, and the number of hours the child was in a nursery, day care center or school per week. In no case were there significant differences. In addition, there was no difference between groups in the percentage of children with older male siblings.

Data Analysis

Two-way analyses of variance were computed for the Father Prime and Mother Prime groups using sex of child and degree of paternal involvement in child care as the independent variables and scores on the various child and relevant parent measures as the dependent variables. Pearson product moment correlations were also computed for the entire sample of 59 and for boys and girls separately, interrelating the child and parent variables and the measures of fathers' involvement in child care. To score the Bem Sex-Role Inventory, the Bem t score was computed as recent research (Jones, Charnovetz, and Hansson, 1978) indicates that the Bem t test is a more valid method of scoring the instrument than the revised procedure recommended by Bem (1976). The t score reflects the difference between the feminine and masculine scores of each respondent and provides a rough estimate of position on the masculine-androgynous-feminine dimension. According to Bem, a score between -1.0 and +1.0 is in the androgynous range, between -1.0 and -2.025 in the near masculine range and below -2.025 in the masculine range. Inasmuch

as this paper will report only on the father responses, and the Bem t means of all groups were negative, the lower the score reported, the more masculine the response.

This paper will discuss the data obtained from the responses of the fathers and children to the instruments administered, and the mother's total score on the Paternal Involvement in Child Care Index. The remaining questionnaire responses of mothers and the observational data have not been analyzed as yet.

Results

The correlations among the major parental measures are presented in Table 1. It can be seen that the total father score on the Paternal Involvement in Child Care Index (PICCI) is closely associated with the total mother PICCI score; the correlation was .68 ($p<.001$). Further, all of the components of the total father PICCI score, except one, correlated significantly with one another and with both mother and father total scores. The exception was the component Decision Making about Child Care. It is comprised of two items, "Who in your family generally makes decisions concerning when the children should be disciplined?" and "Who in your family generally makes decisions concerning when children are old enough to try new things?". Insofar as duration of the current child care arrangement is concerned, the correlation was negative and significant with the total father PICCI score and the component, Father Availability. Hence, the more father involvement in child care and availability,

the shorter the time the current arrangement was in existence. Although all of the father scores on the Hollingshead Index of Social Position (Hollingshead, 1970) were in social strata that would be considered middle class, the data in Table 1 indicate that there was a negative relationship between the father's index of social position and his involvement in child care. It can also be seen in Table 1 that measures of paternal involvement in child care are associated with the Bem t score in divergent ways. As the father's masculine orientation increases (that is, his Bem t score decreases), his statement regarding involvement in child care, and child care per se, decline, but his involvement in decisionmaking concerning child care increases. On the other hand, the father's orientation toward his sex role is unrelated to his involvement in socialization of the child, availability to the child, and to both the Total Father and Total Mother PICCI scores.

In Table 2 are presented the significant correlations between child measures and indices of father involvement for the entire sample of 59. Most evident is the finding that high father involvement is associated with greater internality on the Stanford Preschool Internal-External Scale (SPIES), especially internality concerning negative outcomes. The SPIES scores also correlated significantly with the Total Father PICCI score, Total Mother PICCI score, and with the component, Decision Making about Child Care. Another relationship evident from an examination of Table 2 is that between paternal

involvement in child care and perceptions that children have of parental roles. High father involvement is associated with a reduction in the perception of the mother as punitive on the Kagan measure, and with an increase in the perception of the father as punitive. Although mother punitiveness is significantly and negatively correlated with father punitiveness on the Kagan scale ($r=-.48$, $p<.001$), the two scores are not entirely complementary. In addition, the total saliences of the father appears to increase for the PICCI Grand Total correlates significantly with the total number of responses of "father" on the Kagan measure regardless of the characteristic under consideration. Decision Making about Child Care was also significantly related to the perception of the father as punitive; as his involvement in decision making increased, so too did the child's perception of him as punitive.

The second child measure employed to assess perceptions of the parent role, the Parent Role Perception Test (PRPT) was also linked to indices of father involvement in child care but in the opposite direction. For the PRPT, as PICCI scores increased, stereotyped responses of the youngsters concerning fathers decreased. Thus, the more fathers were involved in child care, the less they were associated with a sex-typed household article. Finally, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test percentile was significantly and positively associated with one of the components of paternal involvement in child care, Statement of Involvement in

Childcare. Child's age was not significantly related to any PICCI score.

In Table 3 appear the significant correlations between the indices of father involvement in child care and child measures for each sex. The pattern is generally similar to that obtained from the total sample. Insofar as the data pertaining to sons are concerned, internality, as assessed by the SPIES, is positively associated with paternal involvement in child care. The correlations between paternal involvement in child care and scores on the Kagan Parent Role Test again indicate that there was an enhancement in stereotypic thinking; the more the father takes on the child rearing role, the less punitive his wife is perceived.

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test percentile once more is linked positively with father involvement in childrearing but this time the association is with the PICCI component Decision Making about Childcare. It is noteworthy that for boys, two independent measures of internality are related to paternal involvement in child care, both the SPIES and the Stephen Delys Locus of Control Measure for Preschool Children. Although there are twice as many significant correlations for girls as for boys, as Table 3 indicates, the pattern is similar. Measures of father involvement in child care are associated with greater internality on the SPIES, both in total score and in responsibility for negative outcomes. On the Kagan test, an increase in father responsibility for child care is associated with an increase in the perception that

the father as punitive and in greater salience of the father. However, for girls, Decision Making about Childcare is associated with an increase in the maternal role stereotype on the Parent Role Perception Test. The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test percentile is also positively correlated with the PICCI component Statement of Involvement as it is for the total sample.

In Table 4 are presented the results obtained from the analyses of variance performed on Mother Prime and Father Prime groups when a significant F was obtained for sex of child effect, father involvement effect, or for an interaction effect. The table reveals that there is a significant effect for father involvement when the Kagan Maternal Punitiveness score is the dependent variable with greater paternal involvement associated with decreased perception of the mother as punitive. There is also a significant father involvement effect for the SPIES Total Internal Score; greater paternal involvement is associated with an enhanced score on internality. On the It Scale there is an effect for sex of child only; boys obtained a higher score indicating a more masculine orientation. The Cognitive Home Environment Scale produces a significant father involvement effect and interaction effect, with the more involved fathers having higher scores and the highly involved fathers of girls having the greatest score. The lowest score is obtained by fathers in the Mother Prime group who have daughters. The remaining analyses for which no significant effects were found involved the Kagan Paternal

Punitiveness and Total Father scores, the SPIES Internal (+) and Internal (-) scores, the Stephen Delys Internal score, the Torgoff Independence score, the PRPT maternal and paternal scores, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test percentile, the Ravens Total score, the Borke Empathy Scale, the Bem t score, and the child's age.

Not included in any of the above tables are the significant correlations obtained between child measures and the Bem t score. For the total sample there were 2 such correlations. The Bem t was significantly associated with the It Scale score (r=-.27) and with the Parental Role Perception Test for maternal stereotypes (r=-.28). For boys, the Bem t score was significantly associated with the PRPT score for paternal role stereotypes (r=-.38); for girls, it was significantly related to the Stephen Delys Internality score (r=-.44). Inasmuch as all of the mean Bem t scores are negative, the above data indicate that for the total sample, as the father's masculine orientation increases, the child's It score becomes more masculine and perception of mothers in stereotypic terms regarding household items increases. For boys, as the father's masculine orientation increases, the youngster's stereotypic perception of the father's role in relation to household articles increases; for girls, as the father's masculine orientation increases, internality as assessed by the Stephen Delys instrument increases. All of the above correlations are at the .05 probability level.

None of the variables related to the father's father, i.e., his nurturance, availability, role in decision making, or total involve-

ment in child care was found to correlate significantly with any measure of paternal involvement in child care. To be certain that the men who were in the Father Prime Caregiver group were not merely modeling their own father, the score obtained for their assessment of their father's involvement in child care was compared with their responses to identical questions about their own involvement. The difference is significant at the .001 probability level (t=7.57). For fathers in the middle group, referred to as the Intermediate Childrearing Group, the scores are also significantly different (t=7.12, $p<.001$). However, for fathers in the Mother Prime Caregiver Group, the difference is not significant (t= 1.73). The grandfathers of the children in the study were clearly in the traditional mold.

Discussion

It is readily acknowledged that the wives of men who are prime caregivers are as nontraditional as their husbands and exert great influence on their children. However, because the focus of this study was upon fathers, particularly fathers who spend much time with their children, the results will be discussed in terms of these men with the understanding that their wife's influence is very strong, as is the interaction effect of both parents' behaviors. These factors will be explored in further analyses of the data.

The finding that preschoolers of both sexes show greater internality when fathers are heavily involved in child care supports

the hypothesis generated, as does the finding that within the total sample, as father involvement increases, so too does his youngster's internal locus of control. This study did not directly assess the internality of the fathers. It was assumed that creators of new roles, particularly in defiance of societal norms, would perceive themselves as masters of the major outcomes in their lives. Whether such family rolemakers do possess and model greater internality than traditional parents remains to be investigated. Further, whether family rolemakers differentially reinforce behaviors of their preschoolers indicative of internality, for example, accepting responsibility for misdeeds, is an independent issue which warrants examination. The finding that children's internality concerning negative outcomes is related to paternal involvement suggests that this may occur.

It was anticipated that parents who have reversed child care roles would have preschoolers with nonstereotyped parental perceptions or with perceptions no different from those of their peers in traditional families. It was surprising to see an accentuation of stereotypes in the area of parental traits. The explanation may lie in the finding that fathers who spend a good deal of time with their children have as masculine an orientation, e.g., assertive, forceful, as men whose wives were the childrearers; in addition, they are more salient to their children than traditional fathers. The net effect may be that a vivid example of a "manly" father is ever-

present, and the children's stereotyped perceptions of fathers as punitive and mothers as nonpunitive are thereby enhanced. Some evidence of whether childrearing fathers are in reality more punitive and their wives less punitive than their traditional counterparts, within a fixed period of time, will be obtained when the observational data of father-child interactions are analyzed.

The indication from the data that father involvement in child care is negatively related to children's stereotyped perceptions concerning household items suggests that the two dimensions of parental perceptions, personal characteristics and activities, are not isomorphic. Children in families where fathers are caregivers appear to see their fathers as using washing machines and brooms but perceive them as forceful nevertheless. Bronfenbrenner's (1958) suggestion that men associated with household items would be perceived by their children as less masculine was not supported by our data.

The finding that childrearing fathers tend to provide more stimulation in the cognitive area for their daughters and hold higher career aspirations for them was not predicted but is in keeping with theories and data suggesting that fathers traditionally foster differential development in sons and daughters, with greater emphasis placed on achievement in boys (Hoffman, 1977; Radin, 1976). It has also been pointed out (Aberle and Naegele, 1952) that middle-class fathers want their sons to do well in school and have desirable

careers but their major aspiration for their daughters is that they marry well and be good wives. Thus, it is not too surprising that men who have chosen to forgo career advancement in favor of child care, as suggested by their lower social class index, with wives who have focused on an occupational role, would differ in this regard. They may well put forth effort to socialize girls so as to develop their intellectual abilities, perhaps to combat sexist influences they will experience in the larger society. Not as readily explained is the finding that more stimulation is present for both boys and girls when fathers are their prime caregivers. Perhaps the desire of middle-class men to foster sons' career development is present in non-traditional as well as traditional families, but men who are rearing their children have more time to operationalize that wish. An alternate explanation that children of childrearing fathers are brighter and therefore elicit more stimulation and higher aspirations is not viable since the Peabody Picture Vocabulary percentile and CHES score were not significantly correlated.

An examination of the It Scale data suggests that the father's sex-role orientation influences the sex-role orientation of the youngster, both boys and girls; the more masculine the father's orientation, the more masculine the child's. The father's role in childrearing appears to be irrelevant. Thus, the study indirectly provided support for the social learning theory of sex role identification; it failed completely, however, to provide clues about

the antecedents of reversed childrearing. None of the responses concerning the father's father were pertinent, although the data about the grandfather's behavior did confirm the fact that the men in all three childrearing groups were raised in traditional families. Perhaps it is the wife's sex-role orientation that influences a couple's decision to switch child care roles, or the combination of both spouses' orientations. When the mother questionnaires are studied in depth, more information on the issue will be forthcoming. Two other hypotheses not confirmed were those pertaining to independence granting of the father and empathy of the child. The data suggest that such variables are unaffected by the degree of paternal involvement in childrearing.

Although the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test was included to ensure matching of the groups on relevant variables, the scores revealed a tendency for the verbal ability of preschoolers to increase as father involvement in child care increases. Reasons for this association can only be speculative at best, however, recent research on paternal behavior with infants (Lamb, 1976; Lamb, 1977; Parke and Sawin, 1977) suggests that the nature of father's play with young children differs from that of their wives. Father's play is described as more unusual, as maintaining the infant's attention more, and as having greater variety and unpredictability. Perhaps this type of nonstereotyped behavior, if present over a prolonged period of time in great quantity, may foster the child's intellective growth. Further research on the issue is clearly needed.

In sum, it appears that middle-class white fathers who have taken on major child care responsibilities are as masculine in orientation as traditional fathers, and their preschooler's sex-role identification is unaffected by this type of family structure. Overall, the children appear to benefit from parental role reversal since their sense of mastery of their own fate is enhanced, their verbal ability is fostered, and the additional cognitive stimulation provided to the children, particularly to the girls, in such homes may help the youngsters fulfill their intellectual potential. Further, there is evidence that some of the children's stereotypic thinking about parents is reduced. However, the data also suggest that what is gained in flexibility concerning perceptions of parental activities is lost in flexibility concerning parental traits.

One final observation should be made about the difficulty experienced in collecting a sample of fathers who are prime caregivers in intact families. In a college community it was not difficult to obtain a sample of parents who said they shared childrearing equally. However, when families were sought in which the men had gone over the 50% share, the number dropped off dramatically. Men might not expect their wives to stay home for most of the day and care for preschoolers, but they appeared reluctant to do so themselves. Perhaps studies such as this will encourage more couples, and those counseling young, white, middle-class parents, to consider reversing child care roles when the children are young. They do not appear to be harmed by the arrangement and the effects may be beneficial, especially for the daughters involved.

Table 1

Intercorrelations Among Selected Parental Measures for the Total Sample

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1 PICCI father total	X	.68***	.87***	.76***	.68***	.64***	.13	-.30*	-.36**	-.16	.16
2 PICCI mother total		X	.54***	.50***	.47***	.46***	.25	-.17	-.26*	-.14	.17
3 PICCI statement of involvement			X	.61***	.39**	.44***	-.07	-.26	-.32*	-.13	.27*
4 PICCI child care				X	.48***	.34*	-.12	-.24	-.13	-.12	.26*
5 PICCI socialization					X	.47***	-.06	-.14	-.27*	-.13	.11
6 PICCI availability						X	-.01	-.36**	-.24	-.16	.14
7 PICCI decisionmaking							X	.08	-.10	.09	-.47***
8 Length of time of c.c. arrange.								X	-.19	.05	-.12
9 Hollingshead Index - Father Total									X	.62***	.20
10 Hollingshead Index - Family Total										X	.03
11 Bem t											X

Note. Because of missing data primarily concerning length of child care arrangements, the N's varied between 51 and 59.

* p<.05

** p<.01

*** p<.001

Table 2

Significant Correlations Between Parent Involvement Variables and Child Variables for Total Sample

Parent Variable	Child Variable	r
PICCI grand total	SPIES total internal	.42***
PICCI grand total	SPIES total (-) a	.36**
PICCI grand total	Kagan total father responses	.27*
PICCI grand total	Kagan total maternal punitiveness	-.27*
PICCI father total	SPIES total internal	.33**
PICCI father total	SPIES total (-) a	.28*
PICCI father total	PRPT paternal role stereotyping	-.28*
PICCI father total	Kagan total maternal punitiveness	-.30*
PICCI mother total	Kagan total paternal punitiveness	.30**
PICCI mother total	Kagan total father responses	.28*
PICCI mother total	SPIES total internal	.44***
PICCI mother total	SPIES total (-) a	.38**
PICCI child care	PRPT paternal role stereotyping	-.32*
PICCI child care	Kagan total maternal punitiveness	-.29*
PICCI decision making	SPIES total internal	.32*
PICCI decision making	Kagan total paternal punitiveness	.27*
PICCI statement involvement	PPVT Percentile	.27*

Note. The N's varied between 54 and 59 because of missing data on some child measures.

[a]The SPIES has two components, assumption of responsibility for positive outcomes (+) and assumption of responsibility for negative outcomes (-).

* $p<.05$
** $p<.01$
*** $p<.001$

Table 3

Significant Correlations Between Parent Involvement Variables and Child Variables By Sex of Child

Sex of Child	Parent Variable	Child Variable	r
Boys	PICCI grand total	SPIES total internal	.37*
	PICCI mother total	SPIES total internal	.40*
	PICCI mother total	Stephens-Delys total internality	.38*
	PICCI child care	Kagan total maternal punitiveness	-.36*
	PICCI decisionmaking	PPVT Percentile	.37*
	PICCI socialization	Kagan Paternal Nurturance	-.42*
Girls	PICCI grand total	SPIES total internal	.53**
	PICCI grand total	SPIES total (-) a	.49**
	PICCI grand total	Kagan paternal punitiveness	.48*
	PICCI father total	SPIES total (-) a	.42*
	PICCI mother total	SPIES total internal	.56**
	PICCI mother total	SPIES total (+) a	.39*
	PICCI mother total	SPIES total (-) a	.50**
	PICCI mother total	Kagan paternal punitiveness	.52**
	PICCI mother total	Kagan total father responses	.38*
	PICCI state. involve.	PPVT Percentile	.47*
	PICCI decisionmaking	PRPT maternal role stereotyping	.49*

Note. Because of missing child data, the N's for boys varied between 30 and 32 and for girls between 26 and 27.

[a]The SPIES has two components, assumption of responsibility for positive outcomes (+) and assumption of responsibility for negative outcomes (-).

* $p < .05$

Table 4

2-Way Analyses of Variance with Significant F Values

Dependent Variable	D.F.	F Value for Sex Effect	F Value for Father's Involvement Effect	F Value for Interaction Effect
Kagan maternal punitiveness	39	0.52	5.68*[a]	0.52
SPIES total internal	38	3.35	10.75**[b]	0.23
It Scale	39	9.63*[c]	0.18	1.25
Cognitive Home Environment Scale	39	.00	4.55*[b]	6.05*[d]

[a]Mean of High Father Involvement group lower than mean of Low Father Involvement group.

[b]Mean of High Father Involvement group higher than mean of Low Father Involvement group.

[c]Mean for boys higher than mean for girls.

[d]Mean for High Involved Fathers with girls is highest of four groups. Mean for Low Father Involved Fathers with girls is lowest of four groups.

* $p<.05$

** $p<.01$

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